

**WASHINGTON, DC** - Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) applauded the House of Representatives approval of the 2007 Farm Bill. The House passed the five-year reauthorization today by a vote of 231-191. "My Valley colleagues and I worked hard to ensure that the Farm Bill represents meaningful reform to farm programs that reflect the priorities and need of our Valley farmers and families," Costa stated.

Such reforms include increasing the funding for nutrition, expanding school lunch and snack programs and bringing a focus to healthy food options like fruits and vegetables. The bill also focused on supplementing conservation programs by adding an additional \$2 billion over five years to the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and targeting \$150 million toward addressing air quality concerns. For the first time, this Farm Bill will provide \$1.6 billion in funding over five years to the specialty crop growers for research and grants that will ensure the continued success and competitiveness of the industry.

Costa, a member of the House Agriculture Committee noted, "I am proud of the House-passed 2007 Farm Bill and I am confident that these programs will be a great step forward for California Agriculture."